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SENSITIVE
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PLEASE PASS TO EUR/RPM AARON COPE AND SCA/A NISHA SINGH

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: KDEM NATO PREL MOPS MARR AF NO

SUBJECT: NORWAY HESITATES ON PROVIDING ADDITIONAL SECURITY
FOR AFGHAN ELECTIONS, BUT COULD BE CONVINCED

REF: STATE 131480

¶1. (SBU) The underdirector of the MFA Pakistan/Afghanistan section of the Norwegian MFA, and the special advisor on Afghanistan in the Ministry of Defense, were unwilling to commit at this stage to additional Norwegian military elements to provide security for the upcoming Afghan elections. Post believes that the Norwegians understand the importance of the elections and might be willing to participate with some additional forces, but that this decision would require time to analyze and prepare any elements which could be offered. Post also believes that unless pushed by Afghan and ISAF officials, the GON will avoid any decision on additional contributions, believing that their existing efforts are sufficient.

¶2. (U) Norway's Afghanistan commitment is its top international commitments, militarily and in humanitarian aid. The GON considers the Afghan election in 2009 to be a milestone in the development and consolidation of democracy in Afghanistan. Norway's current support for the elections includes:

-- 15 million kroner (approximately 2.5 million dollars) for voter registration.
-- Coordination of joint Nordic efforts in support of the elections, including efforts to build capacity among Afghan officials, encouraging more awareness on gender equality and its role in elections, and working on communication initiatives.
-- Norway's embassy is also actively involved with the Afghan government and the UN in planning for the elections.

WHITNEY